

MARCH WEEK 1

SMOKE ALARMS AND 9-VOLT BATTERY SAFETY

Fire Deaths – Working Smoke Alarms Save Lives

- Working smoke alarms save lives, cutting the risk of dying in a home fire in half. Smoke alarms should be installed and maintained in every home.

Installation

- Install smoke alarms in every sleeping room, outside each separate sleeping area, and on every level of the home, including the basement. Larger homes may require additional smoke alarms to provide a minimum level of protection.
- Interconnect all smoke alarms throughout the home for the best protection. When one sounds, they all sound. Make sure you can hear the sound of the smoke alarm.
- It is especially important to have interconnected smoke alarms, if you sleep with your doors closed.
- Smoke alarms can be interconnected electrically by a qualified electrician or by installing battery-operated wireless interconnected smoke alarms.
- For the best protection or where extra time is needed to awaken or assist others, both ionization smoke alarms and photoelectric smoke alarms or combination ionization-photoelectric alarms, also known as dual sensor smoke alarms, are recommended.
- An ionization smoke alarm, in general, is more responsive to flaming fires, and a photoelectric smoke alarm, in general, is more responsive to smoldering fires.
- Choose a smoke alarm that is listed by a qualified testing laboratory.
- Install smoke alarms away from the kitchen to prevent nuisance alarms. They should be at least 10 feet from a cooking appliance.
- Photoelectric type smoke alarms are the best type of alarms to be installed near the kitchen.

Testing and Maintenance

- Test smoke alarms at least once a month using the test button.
- Make sure everyone in the home understands the sound of the smoke alarm and knows how to respond.
- Follow the manufacturer's instructions for cleaning to keep smoke alarms working. The instructions are included in the package or can be found online.



People Who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing

- Install smoke alarms and alert devices that meet the needs of people who are deaf or hard of hearing.
- When the smoke alarm sounds, strobe lights flash to alert people who are deaf or hard of hearing of a possible fire when they are awake.

- When people who are deaf are asleep, a pillow or bed shaker should be used to wake them and alert them to fire conditions so they can escape. This device is activated by the sound of a standard smoke alarm. People who are deaf may find the shaker along with a high intensity strobe light is helpful to wake them.
- When people who are hard of hearing are asleep, a loud, mixed, low- pitched sound alert device should be used to wake them. They may find a pillow or bed shaker is helpful to wake them. These devices are activated by the sound of a standard smoke alarm.
- Choose smoke alarms and accessories for people who are deaf or hard of hearing that are listed by a qualified testing laboratory.



Battery Replacement

- Smoke alarms with non-replaceable (long-life) batteries are designed to remain effective for up to 10 years. If the alarm chirps, warning that the battery is low, replace the entire smoke alarm right away.
- For smoke alarms that don't have replaceable (long-life) batteries, replace batteries at least once a year. If the alarm chirps, replace only the battery.

Smoke Alarm Replacement

- Replace all smoke alarms when they are 10 years old.
- Replace any smoke alarm that does not respond after a new battery has been installed.
- Replace combination smoke-carbon monoxide alarms according to the manufacturer's recommendations.



Rental Housing

- All rental housing must have working smoke alarms. Landlords are required to provide smoke alarms under Georgia Law (O.C.G.A. §25-2-40)
- Be sure smoke alarms are installed in all rental housing. Contact your landlord, property manager, or fire department for help.
- Check with your local fire or building department for information about state and local ordinances on smoke alarm installation and maintenance in rental housing.
- Maintenance of the smoke alarms may be the responsibility of the landlord or the renter, depending on the rental agreement. Maintain the smoke alarm in accordance with manufacturer's instructions.

9 Volt Battery Safety

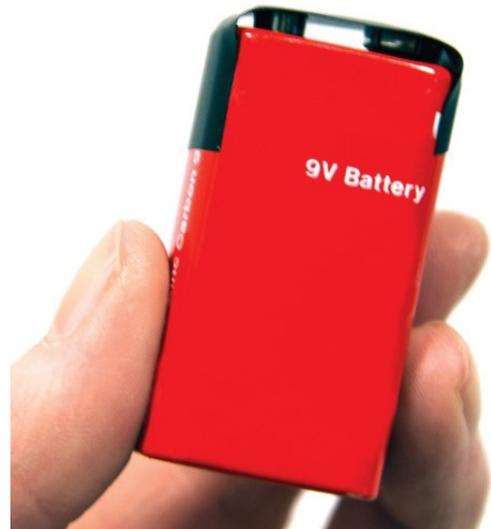
- 9-volt batteries can be used to power smoke alarms, household items and toys. They can be found in most home, but these batteries can be a fire hazard if not stored safely or disposed of with care.
- 9-Volt batteries can be dangerous. The positive and negative post are close together. If a metal object touches the two posts of a 9-volt battery, it can cause a short circuit. This can make enough heat to start a fire.
- It is unsafe to store 9-volt batteries in a drawer near paper clips, coins, pens or other batteries. Do not store common household items such as steel wool, aluminum foil, and key near 9-volt batteries. If these items touch the two posts, there is a greater risk of a fire starting.
- Weak batteries may have enough charge to cause a fire. Some fires have started in trash when 9-volt batteries were thrown away with other metal items.

Storing 9-Volt Batteries

- Keep batteries in original packaging until you are ready to use them. If loose, keep the posts covered with masking, duct, or electrical tape. Prevent the posts from coming in contact with metal objects.
- Keep them someplace safe where they won't be tossed around.
- Store batteries standing up. 9-volt batteries should not be stored loose in a drawer.
- Do not store them in containers with other batteries.

Disposal

- 9-volt batteries should not be thrown away with trash. They can come in contact with other batteries or piece of metal.
- 9-volt batteries can be taken to a collection site for household hazardous waste.
- To be safe, cover the positive and negative posts with masking, duct or electrical tape before getting rid of batteries.
- Some states do not allow any type of battery to be disposed of with trash. Check with your city or town for the best way to get rid of batteries.



Information provided by NFPA <http://www.nfpa.org/public-education/by-topic/smoke-alarms> and <http://www.nfpa.org/~media/files/public-education/resources/safety-tip-sheets/9voltbatterysafety.pdf>